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TWO NATIONS— WHITE AND BLACK

THE EDITORS

A SONG OF COLOR

WILSON MACDONALD

PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN SOCIALISM— REPLY TO SWEEZY *Joseph Starobin*

EDITORS . . . LEO HUBERMAN . . . PAUL M. SWEEZY

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EDITORS: Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy.

NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

Professor Malcolm Sharp's book on the Rosenberg-Sobell case will be published on June 19th, and Agnes Smedley's biography of Chu Teh will be published in the fall. This may not sound like a big publishing program, but don't be deceived: for MR Press it is very big indeed. We are straining our financial resources to the very limit, and it is crucially important that the two books should sell in quantity and fast. The whole future of our book-publishing program is at stake here, and we appeal to all MR readers to pitch in and help. Buy these books and sell them to others. You'll be getting your money's worth and more—and you'll be making it possible for us to continue and expand MR Press. For details see the back cover.

Paul Sweezy's coast-to-coast speaking tour of colleges and universities ended on May 10, having included (in chronological order) visits to the following eighteen institutions of higher learning: Swarthmore, Cornell, University of Colorado, Occidental, Pomona, Claremont, University of California at Los Angeles, University of Southern California, Stanford, University of California at Berkeley, Reed, University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin, University of Chicago, Illinois Wesleyan, Northwestern, Michigan State, and University of Michigan. Sweezy participated in some 50 campus meetings, ranging from regular classes through officially sponsored public

(*continued on inside back cover*)

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TWO NATIONS—WHITE AND BLACK

> *Two nations; between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy; who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were dwellers in different zones, or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws. . . .* The Rich And The Poor.
>
> —B. Disraeli, *Sybil, or The Two Nations,* 1845

What Disraeli wrote of England over a century ago applies with equal truth to the United States today. We, too, have our "two nations," our very rich and our miserably poor; but with us the figure takes on added meaning in the relative position of our white people and our black people. When such a comparison is made, the whites are the rich and the blacks are the poor.*

Racial discrimination is more than an offense against the brotherhood of man; it does violence not only to the spirit of the black people, but to their physical well-being as well. When we enlist in the war against segregation we are fighting for more than the dignity of the black people—we are fighting for their right to eat wholesome food, enjoy decent homes, have the opportunity to get higher education, work in better jobs for better pay, live longer.

Many of us have an idea, in a vague sort of way, that Negroes are worse off than whites, but today, when the race relations problem is most critical, that's not enough; it is imperative that we know the facts, not generally, but specifically. Those facts are available either in government reports or in authoritative special studies. We assemble below some of the revealing statistics.

* To avoid misunderstanding, we should perhaps explain that by using Disraeli's "Two Nations" figure of speech we of course do not imply any support for the false theory that Negroes in the United States constitute a separate nationality in the socio-economic sense of the term.

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Family Income in the United States: 1954[1]

Family Income	*No. of families*	*Total*		*White*		*Nonwhite*	
		Percent	*Cumulative Percent*	*Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*	*Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*
Under $1000	3,700,000	8.8	8.8	7.6	7.6	21.7	21.7
$1000 to $1,999	4,600,000	11.0	19.8	10.0	17.6	21.5	43.2
$2000 to $2,999	5,000,000	11.9	31.7	11.3	28.9	17.1	60.3
$3000 to $3,999	6,400,000	15.4	47.1	15.2	44.1	17.9	78.2
$4000 to $4,999	6,500,000	15.6	62.7	16.1	60.2	9.8	88.0
$5000 to $5,999	5,000,000	11.9	74.6	12.6	72.8	4.7	92.7
$6000 to $6,999	3,600,000	8.5	83.1	9.0	81.8	3.4	96.1
$7000 to $9,999	4,700,000	11.1	94.2	11.9	93.7	3.1	99.2
$10,000 to $14,999	1,800,000	4.4	98.6	4.8	98.5	0.8	100.0
$15,000 and over	600,000	1.0	99.6	1.1	99.6	0.1	100.1
$25,000 and over	. . . .	0.4	100.0	0.4	100.0	. . . . .	
Total No. of families	41,934,000			38,170,000		3,764,000	
Median income		$4,591		$4,827		$2,876	

1 References will be found at the end of the article.

These are the latest available income figures. They tell us a great deal.

They tell us, first, that in the richest nation in the world, in 1954, one of our most prosperous years, 19.8 percent of all the families in the country had a money income, before deductions for taxes, of under $2000. That means that roughly one out of every five American families received less than $40 per week.

Some 13,300,000 families, or 31.7 percent of all American families, had a money income of less than $3000 for the entire year. That means that roughly one out of every 3 families had less than $60 per week to live on.

There is much more to be learned about the poverty and wealth of all American families and we hope readers will give the table the attention it deserves; but our major concern here is not with the country as a whole, but with *the relative position of the whites and the nonwhites.* The nonwhite group, as the Census Bureau defines it, "includes Negroes, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and other nonwhite races." Since the Negroes constitute roughly 96 percent of the nonwhite population, the statistics deal essentially with the white nation and the black nation within our borders.

Most Negroes are desperately poor. The income table shouts that fact. Three times as many Negro families (21.7 percent) as white families (7.6 percent) had a money income of under $1000 in the year 1954. That's less than $20 per week *per family,* not per individual.

The second category under Family Income, the $1000 to $1999 group, tells us how many families were getting less than $40 per week. Among the whites, 17.6 percent; among the Negroes, 43.2 percent, or about 2½ times as many.

More than three out of every five Negro families, 60.3 percent, had less than $60 per week with which to eat, drink, and be merry—and pay the rent, clothe the children, buy schoolbooks, pay the doctor bills. For whites the figure was 28.9 percent.

Look at the Percent column under Nonwhite. Note how it declines, slowly at first, until it gets to the 17.9 figure where it breaks to almost half or 9.8, then breaks in half again when it hits 4.7 percent. Those breaks come as income goes up—and income goes up much more sharply for whites than for Negroes. While only 9.8 percent of the Negro families were in the $4000 to $4999 bracket, the figure was 16.1 percent for whites; while only 4.7 percent of the Negro families were in the $5000 to $5999 bracket, the figure was 12.6 percent for whites.

There are some well-to-do Negroes, of course. But their number

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is very small relative to that of the whites. How many Negro families had a money income of $10,000 to $14,999? Eight-tenths of one percent, or less than 1 out of every 100 Negro families. How many whites were in that bracket? Exactly six times as many.

The statistics for median income[2] round out the picture. For whites, $4827; for nonwhites, $2876.

Over the years there have been, proportionately, more nonwhite women working than white women. Thus in 1954, 44.7 percent of all nonwhite women were in the labor force compared with only 32.5 percent of white women. Why? Mainly because of the low income of nonwhite families, which forces the wife (and frequently the children) to supplement the earnings of the father. Yet despite the fact that the average Negro family had more members working, its median income, in 1954, was less than 60 percent of the average white family.

These income figures are the key to an understanding of the Two Nations in the United States. Many white families are very poor—but the Negro families are much worse off. And their shocking poverty affects every aspect of their life. "It is common knowledge," reports Dr. Marcus Goldstein of the Public Health Service, "that income level has a direct bearing on housing, education, nutrition, medical care, and probably other factors related to health and longevity."[3]

Income level is itself determined, in great part, by the kind of jobs people have, how steady those jobs are, how high their wages are. For the answers to these and related questions we turn now to an examination of another Census Bureau report.

EMPLOYMENT

> *The American race problem is simply a special version of the world colonial problem, which, in the last analysis, is a problem involving the exploitation of labor.*
>
> —Carey McWilliams, *Brothers Under the Skin*

This Census Report is entitled "Employment of White and Nonwhite Persons—1955." It begins with these words:

> Among the most important social and economic developments of the past several decades has been the steady improve-

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> ment in the status of nonwhite persons. Although on the whole they still lag behind whites in many respects—in education, income, and type and adequacy of employment, to mention a few—the historical differentials between the two have been narrowing.[4]

The statistics bear out the fact that the differences between the Two Nations are not as great as they once were. But in respect to jobs, the Negro was so far behind that, with all the marked improvement, he is still at a great disadvantage compared to the white man. This is a summary of the employment picture as it is revealed in the Census Report:

(1) Negroes get the relatively unskilled low-paying jobs; whites get the skilled better-paying jobs. Negroes can go "so far and no further" in many jobs and professions; in others they are excluded entirely (p. 3).

(2) Negroes in non-agricultural industries work fewer hours per week than whites (p. 3).

(3) Negroes have to take more part-time jobs, because they are unable to find full-time work (p. 3).

(4) Negroes are given less overtime work (p. 3).

(5) Negroes have less continuity of employment than whites. "Year-round full-time employment was more prevalent among both white men and women in virtually every industry group, with domestic service the only exception. In 1954, three out of every five white workers had as much as 50 weeks or more of employment, primarily at full-time jobs, as compared to only two out of every five nonwhite workers" (pp. 3-4).

(6) Negroes have a harder time than whites getting jobs. They are the last to be hired and the first to be fired. The rate of unemployment among Negroes, both male and female, is double that of whites. The higher unemployment rate for Negroes appears in every major occupation and industry group (pp. 4-5).

The first table on the next page gives the percent distribution of employed persons, by color and major occupation group in 1955.[5] Note that the professional, technical, managerial, and white-collar clerical and sales jobs are held by 42 percent of the white workers and by only 12 percent of the Negro workers; while in the case of service and other unskilled nonfarm occupations the proportions are reversed—14 percent white and 47 percent Negro.

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Major Occupation Group	*White*	*Nonwhite*
Professional, technical and kindred workers	9.8	3.5
Farmers and farm operators	6.0	5.0
Managers, officials, and proprietors, except farm	11.1	2.3
Clerical and kindred workers	14.2	4.9
Sales workers	6.9	1.3
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	14.1	5.2
Operatives and kindred workers	20.2	20.9
Private household workers	1.8	14.8
Service workers, except private household	7.2	16.8
Farm laborers and foremen	3.9	9.5
Laborers, except farm and mine	4.7	15.8

The table below combines the percentage figures on unemployment rates by color with unemployment figures for all occupations and industries:

Unemployment Rates, By Color and Sex: 1955[6]

	White		*Nonwhite*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
	3.4	3.9	8.2	7.5
All occupations	3.5		7.7	
All industries	3.2		7.5	

One further shameful fact, not mentioned in the Census Report, should be added here: Negroes are still excluded from membership in many labor unions.

That's the relative position of the Two Nations in respect to employment and unemployment. What's behind the inferior status of the Negro? Race prejudice, we are told. Yes, indeed, but what's behind race prejudice? Mr. William Faulkner, recent winner of the Nobel Prize in literature, gave an important answer to this important question in an interview with the New York correspondent for the London *Sunday Times,* reprinted in *The Reporter* on March 22. Mr. Faulkner is in quite a muddle on the problem of segregation—he doesn't like it, thinks "racial discrimination is morally bad, that it stinks, that it shouldn't exist, but it does." Nevertheless, let there be an attempt to enforce the Supreme Court decision of May 17, 1954, on school integration, and Mr. Faulkner would be on the side of the discriminators: "If it came to fighting I'd fight for

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Mississippi against the United States even if it meant going out into the street and shooting Negroes."

But confused though he may be on how to solve the problem, Mr. Faulkner is crystal clear on what's behind it. Here are the questions put to him and his answers:

Q. Is the basic cause of race prejudice economic, in your opinion?

A. Absolutely. To produce cotton we have to have a system of peonage. That is absolutely what is at the bottom of the situation.

Q. Are the psychological rationalizations for prejudice something grafted on to the economic root?

A. Yes, I would say that a planter who has a thousand acres wants to keep the Negro in a position of debt peonage and in order to do it he is going to tell the poor class of white folks that the Negro is going to violate his daughter. But all he wants at the back of it is a system of peonage to produce his cotton at the highest rate of profit.

EDUCATION

One of the gravest charges to which American society is subject is that of failing to provide a reasonable equality of educational opportunity for its youth. For the great majority of our boys and girls, the kind and amount of education they may hope to attain depends, not on their own abilities, but on the family or community into which they happened to be born or, worse still, on the color of their skin or the religion of their parents.

—Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education, 1947

The color of their skin means Negroes—most of whom happen to be born in communities which segregate school children. So their difficulties begin in the kindergarten and continue, for the small number who can stick it out, through college and even after when, as graduate doctors, they can't get into a qualified hospital, or as graduate lawyers they find that the Negro community understandably feels that a white lawyer can do better in a white court than a Negro.

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Segregated schools are inferior schools. Most of the buildings are grimy, dilapidated, overcrowded; the money spent per Negro pupil is less than that spent for whites; teachers' salaries are lower, their training poorer. Small wonder then that the illiteracy rate among Negroes is much higher than that among whites. Here are the figures:

Illiteracy in the Population, 14 years Old and Over, October 1952[7]

Both Sexes		*Male*		*Female*	
White	*Nonwhite*	*White*	*Nonwhite*	*White*	*Nonwhite*
1.8	10.2	2.1	12.7	1.5	8.2

The existence of widespread illiteracy came as a shock to the President's Cabinet in February 1956. They had met to consider the question of getting enough skilled craftsmen for factories and—here's the rub—for the armed forces. They were shown, according to a story in *U.S. News & World Report* for February 24, 1956, a government study detailing the results of a test given to men before they were drafted or enlisted into the armed forces. The test was described as covering "an elementary knowledge of the English language, arithmetic, and the ability to solve simple problems."

The minimum passing score was 10 points out of a possible 100. Eleven percent, or 1 out of every 9 young men, failed.

Eleven percent illiteracy, a shortage of classrooms, many children in school only half time—that's the American elementary school picture today.

But perhaps American education gets better as our youth move up into high school? Undoubtedly it does—but unfortunately only a small percentage ever completes its high school education. According to the Census Report for 1950, in that year only 21.6 percent of the adult white population had completed high school. For Negroes, the figure was only 3.6 percent. The same Census Report gives these figures for college graduates: whites, 6.4 percent; Negroes, 2.2 percent.[8]

Is it surprising that the percentage of whites graduating from college is three times the percentage of Negroes? Not if you remember the family income figures for the Two Nations. For it costs money to go to college and Negroes are desperately poor. "Educational opportunity in the United States, at least above the grammar school level," says the Joint Committee on the Economic Report,[9] "still depends upon income status in marked degree."

A report giving a summary of several studies made in New

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England, the South, and the Middle West, to determine the extent to which money income determines educational opportunity, is cited by the Joint Committee. This is what it says:

> The following facts stand out: (a) The upper-income group sends nearly all its children through high school and about 90 percent to college. (b) The middle-income group sends about 60 percent of its children through high school and about 15 percent to college or some other higher institution. (c) The lower-income group sends about 30 percent of its children through high school and about 5 percent to college. It is usually a sacrifice for parents of this group to keep their children even in high school and they cannot possibly pay money toward college. The very few who aspire to college must work their way without help from home.
>
> The report goes on to estimate that from 3 to 5 percent of our young people, or annually some 75,000 to 125,000, are of college caliber and would go to college if they could but are prevented by poverty.[10]

Extreme poverty is the lot of over half the Negro nation. That's the telling fact when it comes to the Negro student and higher education.

HOUSING

> *Equality of opportunity to rent or buy a home should exist for every American. Today, many of our citizens face a double barrier when they try to satisfy their housing needs. They first encounter a general housing shortage which makes it difficult for any family without a home to find one. They then encounter prejudice and discrimination based upon race, color, or national origin, which places them at a disadvantage in competing for the limited housing that is available.*
>
> —Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights, 1947

Imagine all the people in the United States packed into an area one-half the size of New York City. That's what it's like to live in Harlem. In just one block of that Negro ghetto, 3871 people have

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their "homes." "At the same rate of density," says a handbook put out by the National Community Relations Advisory Council in 1952, "the entire population of the United States would live in one-half the geographic area of New York City."[11]

Water drips from the ceiling in many of these houses, walls are cracked, windows are broken, floors are rotten, and the plumbing, says Charles Abrams, formerly New York State Rent Administrator, and today Chairman of the New York State Commission Against Discrimination, "serves as a promenade for rats."[12]

That's not just a fancy figure of speech. It's a fact. "There were 481 officially reported cases of rat bites in 1952, and since it is estimated that only 1 in 5 cases is reported, some 2500 human beings —mostly babies—are bitten by rats every year. Most of the cases are in the Harlem slums."[13]

New York has its Harlem, Chicago its South Side, and other cities, large and small, have their counterpart Negro slum areas. In respect to the basic amenities, here are the figures for urban areas for 1950, compiled by the government's Housing and Home Finance Agency: Of homes that lack either running water, private toilet, or bath, nonwhites live in 30 percent, whites in 11 percent; of homes that lack a private flush toilet, nonwhites live in 42 percent, whites in 10 percent.

What housing is like for the Negro nation in rural nonfarm areas can be gathered from one simple statistic: three fourths of the nonwhite families in 1950 did not have piped running water; one fourth of the white families.[14]

The Housing Agency's definition of a dilapidated dwelling unit is one which is so run-down or has such serious deficiencies as not to "provide adequate shelter or protection against the elements, or endangers the safety of the occupants" (p. 17). How many Negroes' houses were "dilapidated"? Twenty-seven percent—five times the proportion of white houses (p. 12).

Discomfort and distress are not the worst aspects of living in such slums. In addition, the Committee on the Hygiene of Housing has pointed out, "more damage is done to the . . . children of the United States by a sense of chronic inferiority due to the consciousness of living in substandard dwellings than by all the defective plumbing which those dwellings may contain."[15]

Many people have the idea that Negroes live in slum areas because they are poor and can only afford miserable low-rent dwellings. That notion is understandable—but it's mistaken. It's true that Negroes are desperately poor, and it's also true that the slums they live in are miserable, but it is *not* true that slum rents are low. On

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the contrary. In many cases prevailing rentals in the Negro ghetto are higher than in other sections of the city.

The obvious answer for the slum dwellers is, of course, not to stand for it, to move out. That's an answer that applies to whites—but not to Negroes. They can't move out. They are hemmed in, segregated, forced to stay in the "black belt."

Cities are overcrowded, so white people who can afford it move to the less crowded residential suburbs. But Negroes who can afford to move find these suburbs are "restricted." Not for them.

Cities are overcrowded, so public and private agencies build giant housing projects. Whites move in freely, and some Negroes get into some of the new buildings. But nowhere near enough to satisfy the demand. "In the 17 years since 1935 less than 1 percent of new dwelling construction was for the nonwhite families who comprise 10 percent of the population."[16]

There's money to be made in confining Negroes to ghetto life. Lots of money. Landlords don't make much-needed repairs—and they get away with it because their tenants are Negroes who are not in a position to move elsewhere.

Just as there is a squeeze on Negroes in the employment field, so there is a squeeze on Negroes in housing too. With the same results in both cases—extra profits for employers and landlords.

Employers refuse to hire you for certain jobs and thus crowd you into a restricted number of occupations where the resulting competition forces your wages down. Or they refuse to pay you wages equal to whites for equal work. And all the time they do everything they can to divide white and Negro workers, so they can be played off against each other with resultant lower wages for both.

In housing, the real estate and banking interests won't permit you to live where you want to live but force you to crowd into congested slum districts. "The same real estate interests that make money by excluding colored people from new subdivisions are able to collect inflated rentals from the slums into which they are driven. A profit is made on the Negro coming and going."[17]

People have been led to believe that Negroes create the slums. Not true. In most cases, the only places Negroes can get to live are in run-down neighborhoods where the houses are falling apart and in extreme disrepair. The Negroes don't make the slum district—they get into the neighborhood only because it already is a slum.

Negroes, we are told, live in unsanitary fashion with garbage strewn about, vermin infesting the walls, rats all over the place. Unfortunately that's too often true. The question is, however, do the

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Negroes do it, or is it done *to* them? Charles Abrams puts the responsibility where it belongs in this pertinent observation:

> Garbage collections, building inspections, street maintenance, and other city services are less satisfactory than in other areas. The abnormal number of rat bites in Harlem, for example, may be ascribed not only to lack of proper upkeep but to the ready supply of uncollected garbage in the streets. Southern cities and some in the North omit street paving and sidewalks in Negro sections.[18]

Even more convincing evidence that Negroes, given a chance, take good care of their homes was furnished a few years ago, by real estate men themselves. In a survey conducted by the National Association of Real Estate Boards, this question was asked: "Does the Negro abuse property, or does he take as good care of it as other tenants of comparable status?" The answer, from 73 percent of the local real estate boards reporting, was: "He takes good care of it, in many cases better than other tenants of his economic group."[19]

The President's Committee on Civil Rights tells us that "equality of opportunity to rent or buy a home should exist for every American." Indeed it *should*. But it doesn't. It doesn't exist for the Negro nation which cannot choose freely but must pay more for a poorer place to live.

HEALTH

Yet do I marvel at this curious thing
To make a poet black and bid him sing.
—Countee Cullen

The bitter irony of Countee Cullen's lines comes inevitably to mind when one remembers that being born with a black skin means that your chance of dying as an infant is 77 percent greater; and that even if you survive the Negro's higher incidence of disease, your average length of life will be 8 years shorter.

According to the Joint Committee on the Economic Report, in the years 1951 and 1952 "the infant mortality rate among Negroes in the United States was 45.6 per 1000 infants as compared with 25.7 per 1000 infants born to white mothers."[20]

Does this mean that it is more difficult for Negro women to

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bear children than it is for white women? Not at all. It means that many more nonwhite mothers are delivered without benefit of medical attendance. It means, according to the Joint Committee on the Economic Report, that "maternity care by physicians in hospitals has progressed more slowly in the case of the nonwhite mothers."[21] It means a direct cause and effect relationship between overcrowding in slums and infant deaths because "the infant mortality rate, which is the most sensitive index to urban social conditions, is two and a half times higher among families with two or more persons per room than among families with one person or less per room."[22]

Back in 1900, the rate of mortality for all causes in both sexes was 17.6 deaths per 1000 whites and 27.8 deaths per 1000 Negroes. Remarkable progress has been made in the half-century since that time—the rate has been cut in half in each instance. In 1949, for whites the rate was 8.4 deaths per 1000; for Negroes, 12.6 deaths per 1000.[23] Progress in both cases—but still more Negroes die.

Is there any reason to suppose that Negroes are born less healthy than whites? No. Nevertheless, something happens after they are born which causes them to die earlier. "In 1950 the average life expectancy at birth in the United States was 61.0 years for the nonwhite population compared with 69.2 years for the white group."[24]

What happens is that the Negro nation is desperately poor. The food Negroes eat, the houses they live in, the medical care they receive, are not as good as they are for whites. How long you live is determined primarily by where and how you live. That's the answer.

Convincing evidence of the direct relationship between income and health comes from the figures in respect to tuberculosis. Deaths from this disease have declined significantly in recent years. But Negroes always have been, and still are, greater victims than whites. Because the death rate was so much higher, the belief grew that Negroes were particularly susceptible. But one study after another has shown that more Negroes die each year not because they are more susceptible, but because they are more poor. Where their living conditions are as good as or better than those of a white group, their death rate from tuberculosis is as low or lower.

Harlem, notorious for its slum housing, has always had a high TB death rate. The cure for the disease was indicated recently by Mr. Joseph P. McMurray, speaking at the annual meeting of the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association. Here is the report of Mr. McMurray's speech in the *New York Times* of April 4, 1956:

> State Housing Commissioner Joseph P. McMurray told a session on housing as a health factor, that tuberculosis incidence

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and other health problems were lower in good housing projects than in the areas surrounding them.

He said that the infant mortality rate in three state-aided projects in Harlem was less than half that of the other part of the health areas in which they are located.

He said that in the tuberculosis incidence, Elliot Houses containing 2300 units had not a single case in 1953 while the surrounding area had three cases per thousand population.

Mr. McMurray said that in the five Manhattan health areas with the greatest proportion of bad housing, more than 11 percent of the borough's tuberculosis cases and 15 percent of the deaths occur.

What Mr. McMurray was really telling his audience was a simple truth—that the worst disease is poverty. This is the disease that afflicts the Negro nation.

Millions of whites are poor, true, but the Negroes' poverty is a special kind of poverty—one made to order, so to speak, by racial discrimination and segregation. It is special, too, in that it is more widespread since it affects, in one way or another, not part of the people but the whole Negro community.

The statistics on income, employment, education, housing, and health prove that segregation blights and maims the lives of millions of Negroes. It is literally a killer of people.

Let the "gradualists" who cry patience, let the middle-of-the-roaders who advise going slowly, take heed of that fact. Let them face the issue squarely—to sanction segregation, even for a moment, is to sanction murder. (May 15, 1956)

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1 This table is compiled from the following two sources: *Current Population Reports, Consumer Income, Family Income in the United States*: 1954 *and* 1953. Bureau of the Census, Series P-60, No. 20, December 1955, Table 2, p. 11; and *Number of Families by Family Income, for the United States,* 1954, *Characteristics of the Low-Income Population and Related Federal Programs,* Joint Committee on the Economic Report, 84th Congress, 1st Session, U.S. Government Printing Office, Table 9, p. 13. Detail does not necessarily add up to the total because of rounding of figures.

2 The Census Bureau defines median income as "the amount which divides the distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median, and the other having incomes below the median."

3 Marcus S. Goldstein, "Longevity and Health Status of Whites and Nonwhites in the United States," *Journal of the National Medical Association,* March 1954, p. 92.

4 *Current Population Reports, Labor Force, Employment of White and Nonwhite Persons*: 1955, Bureau of the Census, Series P-50, No. 66, March 1956.

5 *Ibid.,* from Table 3, p. 11.

6 *Ibid.,* from Table B, p. 4, and Tables 9 and 10, p. 11.

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7 Joint Committee on the Economic Report, *op.cit.*, Table 1, p. 157. Persons completing less than six years of school are classified as illiterate.
8 Miller, Carroll L.: "The Relative Educational Attainment of the Negro Population in the United States, *The Journal of Negro Education*, Summer 1953, p. 390.
9 *Low-Income Families and Economic Stability*, Joint Committee on the Economic Report, 81st Congress, 2nd Session, U.S. Government Printing Office, p. 16.
10 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
11 *Equality of Opportunity in Housing, A Handbook of Facts*, National Community Relations Advisory Council, New York, June 1952, p. 6.
12 Charles Abrams, *Forbidden Neighbors*, New York 1955, p. 74.
13 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
14 *Housing of the Nonwhite Population*, 1940 *to* 1950, Housing and Home Finance Agency, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., July 1952, p. 12.
15 Quoted in *Equality of Opportunity in Housing, op. cit.*, p. 7.
16 Abrams, *op. cit.*, p. 172.
17 *Segregation in Washington*, A Report of the National Committee on Segregation in the Nation's Capital, 1948, p. 33.
18 Abrams, *op. cit.*, p. 75.
19 *Segregation in Washington, op. cit.*, p. 31.
20 *Characteristics of the Low-Income Population and Related Federal Programs*, Joint Committee on the Economic Report, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.
21 *Ibid.*, p. 62.
22 Abrams, *op. cit.*, p. 75, citing study by Robert M. Woodbury, *Causal Factors in Infant Mortality*, U.S. Children's Bureau, Publication No. 142.
23 Marcus S. Goldstein, *op. cit.*, p. 87.
24 *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Our *fight for freedom begins when we get to San Francisco.*
—A Negro soldier returning from Okinawa, 1945

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others. . . . One feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.
—W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*

The Constitution does not provide for first and second class citizens.
—Wendell L. Willkie, *An American Program*

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HIGHER LEARNING

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A SONG OF COLOR

BY WILSON MACDONALD

Four White Men climbed
to Heaven's throne;
and each man went
on his way, alone.

The First man said,
when he came back:
"The God I met
was very black;

"But when He spoke
His teeth flashed white,
like a row of pearls
against soft light."

The Second Man cried:
"The God I saw
had skin as yellow
as the sun on straw.

"But when I looked
in his strong, slant eyes,
sweet lotus petals
filled all the skies."

"God's face is brown,"
the Third Man spoke,
"like autumn leaves
on a great, bronze oak.

"And His eyes are deep
like bottomless wells,
and His words are like
a chime of bells."

"The God I saw,"
the Fourth Man said,
"wore a feather plume,
and His face was red.

"His eyes were quiet,
like forest aisles,
and a wildwood rose
was in His smiles."

I gaze from my window,
as I write;
and I know, as I look
through the smoke-filled
light,
why none of the Four
said, "God is White."

Wilson MacDonald is one of Canada's best-known poets. He is also a socialist of long standing. Albert Einstein, after a trip to Canada, once wrote: "The greatest thing I discovered in Canada was Wilson MacDonald. Canada must be proud of this great genius writing in her midst." *A Song of Color* was inspired by the news of the exclusion of Autherine Lucy from the University of Alabama. It was originally published in the *Toronto Star* on Mr. MacDonald's stipulation that he be allowed to give it free distribution thereafter throughout the world. He sent the poem to MR through his close friend Scott Nearing, and we are proud to be the first to publish it in the United States.—ED.

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PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN SOCIALISM

We continue the broad discussion (begun in last month's issue) with Joseph Starobin's response to Paul Sweezy's review of his recent book (see Sweezy, "From Paris to Peking to New York," MR, March 1956).

Last month's discussion pieces have evoked a good deal of comment, and A.P.'s "If Not Now, When?" has been particularly commended by many readers. One correction, however, deserves to be recorded. A correspondent writes: "The quotation on page 17 is incomplete. It should read: 'If I am not for myself, who is for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?' This is much better socialist propaganda than the version you printed. Further, it is not from the Bible but from the "Ethics of the Fathers," one book in the *Mishnah* (also contained in the *Standard Hebrew Prayer Book*), where it is ascribed to Hillel." Our correspondent is right: the full quotation *is* much better socialist propaganda.—THE EDITORS

REPLY TO SWEEZY

By Joseph R. Starobin

Dr. Paul M. Sweezy has been among the first to acknowledge that my recent book, *From Paris to Peking*, was intended to be more than a political travelogue.* The experiences in western Europe and the survey of the new China's first years were all interwoven with questions about the American Left which became more and more insistent the more I traveled. I could have wished that Dr. Sweezy had cited not only the questions, but the answers—such as they are in the book. It is true, as I reread it today, that the author censored himself in many ways, and perhaps, as some critics have said, its aloof tone became a barrier to part of the audience I had in mind. But *Paris to Peking* did anticipate some of the debate that is now surging through the Left, a fact which most of its reviewers failed to share with their readers.

It was ungracious, however, for Dr. Sweezy to single this book out in his all-too-sweeping critique of the many writers, historians, playwrights, and journalists who, like myself, have drawn inspiration from Marxism, whatever their affiliation with the American Com-

* See P. M. Sweezy, "From Paris to Peking to New York," MR, March 1956.

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munist Party. Sweezy would not have diminished the force of his criticism if he had credited the intentions and the very real achievements of many, many others. He would have done better to situate this book within the trend of re-appraisal that is awakening the Left, and going far beyond it. Many others began their re-appraisal well before the Soviet Communist Party's 20th Congress, some of them in jail, and some when they were wrenched from the previous routine of their lives. The very force with which the Soviet Congress has erupted a debate in Communist circles is a sign of how ripe it was, and how many pressures had built up for a long time.

Some people I know have made it their main concern to send me SOS signals, as though Dr. Sweezy were some sort of Lorelei, beckoning to the unwary from the hills of New Hampshire. I think this misses the point, and shows how far these friends have to go. In my view, the MR article is part of the Left's re-examination, and I know of no way to make progress without a great deal of listening—to hard truths, and half-truths, and even untruths. Indeed, I would welcome these from circles far to the right of Dr. Sweezy. To fight for the restoration of American Marxists to their full freedom in the market-place of ideas and activities supposes some humility, and a readiness to break the sequence of soliloquies. Sweezy recognizes that my book invited exactly that. And just as his comments go well beyond the book, so my reply is bound to go beyond his.

It is of no small importance that the MR piece appeared before the full impact of the Soviet Congress. For this has the merit of placing the discussion in its American context. Of course, what the Soviet Communists have done is of world importance, and the political effects are already altering the relations of parties and nations. The root of their problem arose from within their own history, but to the extent that we made their history so much of our own, their re-appraisal is a great challenge to us. Yet the real point of departure is the fact that a new era of peaceful co-existence and competition has matured; this is what made the Soviet re-evaluation possible and necessary. It is also the only true starting point of our own. To base ourselves on what Stalin did or did not do would perpetuate past mistakes and outmoded relationships. It would falsify the true basis of the very American problems that only we can solve, if anybody can.

I see three or four main areas for re-appraisal, not only by American Communists but everyone on the Left. We are in the kind of crisis in which no one can really resolve problems without a great deal of mutual aid. First, there is the central issue of stance toward the socialist world, and the parties of socialism in the Soviet Union and other countries. Sweezy attributes the decline of the American

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Communists in part to their "foreign-ness", which he thinks arose from the ethnic composition of the American working class at the time of the Russian Revolution. But very important native-born elements of the old Socialist Party and the Wobblies came to Communism at the outset. And in the '30s and '40s, the movement was refreshed by an indigenous new generation.

The real problem has been that American Communists did not achieve a relationship of genuine alliance with the Soviet and other Communists. An alliance implies not only fraternal feeling, but the inner confidence that different things will be done at different times or at the same time by different members of it. It is precisely this flexibility that tests an alliance, especially when the strength of its members is unequal. The Soviet Revolution had an immense impact on all socialist-minded circles, and it propelled the world forward, and carried history on its shoulders. But it should never have been a model for others, because to make it so overlooked its uniqueness, the specific national background and circumstances in which it came to pass. In a much-neglected speech at the 4th Congress of the Communist International (November 13, 1922) Lenin said he thought "we have made a big mistake." The resolution adopted at the 3rd Congress, he said, "is too Russian. It reflects Russian experience. This is what is unintelligible for foreigners. But they cannot be content with hanging it in a corner like an icon and praying to it. Nothing will be achieved this way."

For 25 years, the big bugaboo has been "American exceptionalism," and anyone who tried to base himself on the particular features of American life ran the risk of being told he was denying that capitalism is capitalism. This fatal confusion could only have held sway in an atmosphere of denying, in practice whatever the words were, the very exceptional problems posed by American history and American reality in a changing world. How else could it have been? For if the United States did not pose unique problems, the whole world problem would have been different. The fixation on Russian experience, and all manner of things Russian, was not a true solidarity toward an ally. The fact that so large a number of "old-timers" in the Left are reacting with such genuine shock to some harsh, unpleasant facts shows best of all how unprepared they were by several generations of a wrong concept in relations among Communists of different countries. At bottom, there was a light-minded appreciation of what it means to hold the vision of a socialist America, and to work for it effectively. It was an underestimation not only of our country's greatness, but of the greatness of our own mission. To paraphrase Alexander Pope, "the proper study of American Marxists is America."

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This brings me to a second point. It was one of Marx's cardinal ideas, in his Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy,* that socialism is only possible when the previous social order has exhausted its potentialities for growth, and when its contradictions require a transition to something higher, which will always be based on what had been achieved before. To view socialism only as a negation of capitalism misses the other aspect of the dialectic: that it is an extension beyond, on the basis of the technological levels reached by, and the whole complex of traditions embodied in, the old order.

To be an effective socialist requires championing the conservation of the best in our achievements and traditions as a people, and projecting a program and conducting such activities as make this clear, despite the slander and attack of the ruling class. This is one reason why American Communists were effective in the '30s and '40s. They identified with a living tradition and had a program for its growth. Criticism in itself, that is, propaganda without real contribution to the advance of a real political movement, does not justify the existence of a Communist or a Socialist Party.

It is indisputable that this concept went lost in the past ten years. In its place, there developed a cataclysmic view of events both abroad and at home, which flew in the face of realities, and which justified itself by the idea that simply to oppose, to expose, to stand firm, to denounce—or even to educate abstractly—constituted the work of a movement. The critical period to re-examine whether or not this was so lies between the end of 1948, when the results were piling in from the influence of a cataclysmic concept, and the spring of 1951, when the onslaught of anti-Communist repression and the deadlock in the cold war called for some deep thinking.

In estimating the course of the struggle between the two social systems which broke out with such sharpness after 1945, American Marxists tended more and more to see a world war as the most probable outcome, with fascism at home as an almost-fatalistic accompaniment. Very little room was left—I am speaking of deeds, and not words—for the alternative that peaceful coexistence would win out. That is, the conflict would be transferred to a plane which did not entail world war. A Chinese estimate in 1947 by the noted Communist leader, Liu Ting-yi, which did not take the cataclysmic view at all, was hardly taken into account. The theory gained great prestige that if American imperialism had its way, it would move to smash socialism by atomic force; but if it were blocked, it would do the same thing out of sheer frustration.

I cannot explain the most critical moves of the past ten years, namely, the decision of some Communist leaders to evade prison terms

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in 1951 and the dismantling of almost all normal organizational life that followed and left its effects until recently, except on the predominant power of this cataclysmic conception of history. The idea of Armageddon, and hence of a sort of Custer's last stand, permeated everything—from how to preserve the unity of the trade unions, to the character of the Negro question, to literary criticism. All the glimpses of a re-appraisal which begin to appear in *Political Affairs* as early as 1952 never took hold because this central doctrine remained unchallenged.

One reason for it, I think, is that the American Communist movement was faced early in the postwar decade with a divorce between its trade-union components and its political leaders. All movements of the Left have had this problem. Groups such as the ADA have not solved it, and the Communists did better than most. But the "separation of powers" which became frozen with the Taft-Hartley Act resulted in a situation in which the patient, practical, more realistic approach that working people give to any movement did not register in this one as far as crucial decisions went.

Another reason lies deep in postwar history. The cataclysmic view proved hard to check because of a "fear of Browderism," which became a ghost that haunted the movement and was almost as damaging as the "ism" itself. Much that had to be done to fight off repression and to combat isolation sounded like the things that had been done under Browder's leadership, and then rejected root and branch. There was always a raven saying "nevermore" to anyone who proposed a different policy. It goes without saying that all those individuals, and thousands of humble people, who paid the price of all this were personally courageous, and the fight they made against war and reaction was historic. But many were prisoners of their own past before becoming prisoners of J. Edgar Hoover. I cannot see a healthy clarification until there is real digging into the period when Browder's false conceptions were rejected. It should be easier to do this since Browder personally is not a factor in the matter, but it would be necessary even if he were.

The problem of organizational structures and procedures arises. "Democratic centralism" was borrowed from the Russians as they developed it at a particular moment of their history; but since it has proved unworkable to them at another stage, it is a big question how valid it is for the American Left, especially in the present time. There has been centralism with little democracy. No institutional forms have permitted the weighing of alternative proposals by the members, the testing of leaders by their policies, and provisions for their recall, and the rapid adoption of new policies. It is true that repression was given as a justification for dispensing with such practices.

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But the policies adopted did not serve to solve the problems posed by repression either. Not only big Stalins but a myriad of little ones grew in this climate, un-repaired by self-criticism. A different structure for democratic decisions and their implementation needs to be found.

In this respect, there is what I would call a "Holy Rollerism" which becomes a practice within a movement that harms its relations with the very friends it wishes to make. This is the habit of mind whereby the last person to join considers all those outside the ranks as not only wrong, but knowing that they are wrong, hence both heathen and hypocrites. Next to the fear of "guilt by association" which so ravaged the liberals and conservatives in these years, as Milton Mayer admitted in *The Progressive* recently, I would say this habit has been most destructive of genuine intercourse between Communists and non-Communists. And since no one has mentioned it yet, it is appropriate to say here that Alexander Bittelman's assault on MR back in 1951 was an example of this kind of thing to the point of being scurrilous. Those like myself, who disagreed with it privately but not publicly, bear a heavy responsibility for its effects.

Was it all the unwinding of objective historical processes, as Dr. Doxey Wilkerson suggests in reviewing *Paris to Peking* in *Masses & Mainstream*? Was it the "perpetual mobility of American institutions," to use Emerson's phrase, that made us its victims? I think this is too deterministic a view, and the problem remains of what to do now. Here I do not share Dr. Sweezy's melancholy view of the American Communists, which I suspect he feels about the future of the Left as a whole. Nor does I. F. Stone's suggestion that everything would be fine if everybody else folded up their tents and quietly stole away make much sense, either.

Traveling about the country in these past three years, I am aware of the fragmentation of the Left and the great weakening of the American Communists, in terms of those who come to meetings or read the press. But there is a large body of people who carry on a daily battle for great and good causes in a different way than they had in the past. It is a molecular activity—in unions, community groups, anti-discrimination struggles, universities—and has nothing in common with the conspiracies that J. Edgar Hoover rants about. These are people who have in some ways made their re-appraisals in a personal, empirical way, relying on their own good sense; many are members of the Communist Party, no doubt, or draw their general inspiration from it. I do not say they will solve all our problems, and perhaps they will only help to catalyze larger movements. But no problems can be solved without them, as *Monthly Review*

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itself realized in its very good introduction to a discussion of "Co-operation on the Left" back in March, 1950.

If new organizations are needed to achieve socialist education in the universities and in the trade unions, and to help restore legality to Marxist thought, let them come in their time. But I doubt whether they can come without everyone on the Left helping to solve everyone's problems, and I doubt whether non-Communists are really able to grapple with theirs except as part of the process whereby the Communists come to terms with their past, so that the present can really be a prologue. I remember a slogan at a Women's Congress in Peking that said: "Let the flowers of all seasons flourish together." I would say that if they are not yet ready to do that, let them flourish separately. I believe that people help each other, even in competition. It is in this sense that Dr. Sweezy's article was stimulating, even where I disagree with it.

But the time is at hand when *Monthly Review*, like all the rest of us, needs to make a deeper re-examination, not only of our common problems, but of its own perspectives. It is true that the Communists, who have been the major force on the Left, have more to re-examine; but can any one deny that they are doing so, as the pages of their press indicate, with an impressive earnestness? The need is for more of this, on everyone's part. And some day soon, all of us will have to come together and talk our differences out and reach a basis for the reconstitution of a new movement of socialist-minded Americans, capable of living up to the great challenges of our time. Criticism and competition must some day lead to co-operation.

BOUND VOLUMES

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WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

The Power Game in London

When Bulganin and Khrushchev paid their April visit to London, they were moving, under a flag of truce, into enemy territory. This was made clear at the outset by Eden's cold, formal, almost hostile greeting:

> I am glad to welcome to this country Mr. Bulganin, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, and Mr. Khrushchev, member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. This visit is the outcome of an invitation I extended to our guests at the time of the meeting of the heads of government at Geneva. Since then, many events have taken place in the international scene but I am sure that our guests will agree with me that their visit as a result is more than ever important. We look forward to conversations with Mr. Bulganin and Mr. Khrushchev about the many matters which concern Anglo-Soviet relations and the peace and prosperity of the world. This is the first occasion on which the leaders of the Soviet Union have visited this country. In greeting them, I express the hope that we shall be able to improve relations between our countries and our peoples.

Khrushchev, after Mr. Eden had set the tone, was more specific in describing the situation when he told a British audience: We know that you do not like communism. We, on our side, do not like capitalism. Still, we can get on together if we make up our minds to it.

For ten days the drama of this visit of Soviet leaders to the capital of European capitalism occupied the center of the British political stage. The spokesmen for communism looked eagerly and hopefully for a chance to make an appeal to the British public over the heads of the spokesmen for capitalism. But that move had been anticipated. The Prime Minister assured the House of Commons, before the arrival of the Communist guests, that they came to talk politics, and for no other purpose. Bulganin and Khrushchev were invited to Britain to play a hand of power-politics poker.

Public indifference and hostility were part of the elaborate stage setting. For weeks these attitudes had been built up by official and unofficial propaganda.

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Their visits to Asian countries had been holidays for the Soviet representatives by comparison with this intrusion into the Lion's Den. The Asians, having but recently escaped from the Lion's claws, were festively-minded and turned out happily to announce and celebrate their new-found freedom. Each time the Soviet spokesmen declared for independence and self-determination, the Asian crowds responded with wild "hurrahs." Britain was in no holiday mood.

Britain's Dilemma

Britishers, from monarch to humblest commoner, knew the score.

Since the Boer War of 1899 Great Britain has been slipping into an economic and social morass. The decline was barely perceptible before 1914. Between 1918 and 1939 it was plain to see. Since 1945 it has been terribly rapid.

Not only had the British lost India, "the brightest jewel in the Imperial crown," with Burma and Ceylon, but Suez was throwing out its British garrison, Cyprus and Malaya were in open revolt. Singapore was seething with unrest, and Britain's vast colonial holdings in Africa were slipping their imperial leading strings. Perforce, London had turned over to Washington the task of safeguarding imperial law and order in the Eastern Mediterranean. United States capital was moving with giant strides into the Near and Middle East, threatening Britain's chief source of oil. German and Japanese competition were undercutting Britain's export markets. Furthermore, exports were falling as imports rose and inflation was creeping up on the economy, threatening the entire foundation of British finances.

Bulganin and Khrushchev, listening carefully, might have heard the death-rattle of the British Empire and the labored breathing of British economy in the final stages of its mortal sickness of profit accumulation and glut.

High Stakes

Power politics is not played for individual profit, or even for national security. It is played for the life and death of nations, empires, and social systems. The high cards in the game are natural resources; implements of production, transportation, and communication; the survival of ruling oligarchies; mass loyalty and the willingness of subordinates to work and fight for the power holders; defense pacts and groupings of allies and dependents.

Every capitalist oligarchy, during the crucial years since the Russian Revolution of 1917, has prepared itself to meet the threat of socialization by mobilizing, organizing, and uniting their supporters, subordinates, and dependents among the technicians and the profes-

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sions, and such allies as they might secure among the industrial workers and farmers. Thus far, in the course of the current world struggle of capitalism to survive and of socialism to drive the capitalists from power, and take over the direction of public policy, not one highly industrialized area has abandoned capitalism and adopted socialism. In April, 1956, the British oligarchs were wary, watchful, and determined to use the Bulganin-Khrushchev visit for their own purposes.

On their side, the Soviet leaders and their associates had three major objectives: First, they wanted a cessation of war and of the waste of military preparedness. Second, they wanted the dependent peoples to win not merely self-determination, but an adequate standard of health and social well-being. Third, they wanted a world, planned and organized to produce and distribute the necessaries and decencies of life on a basis of need.

In the long run, Bulganin and Khrushchev were proposing that the British Oligarchs bow themselves off from the stage of history. Immediately, however, they were asking for peaceful co-existence, trade in essential commodities, and an agreed policy that would enable the backward areas of Asia and Africa to come abreast of their more advanced neighbors. In effect, the Soviet spokesmen attained their objectives. They went to Britain, lived for ten days in a hotbed of antagonism and opposition, and went home with a trade agreement and an understanding that would allow Moscow to play a role in the rapidly changing Arab world.

Still Carrying the Ball

Bulganin and Khrushchev have not stopped traveling. Their next objective is the United States.

Welles Hangen began his Moscow story in the *New York Times* of May 1, 1956: "Nikita S. Khrushchev returned from Britain today with his gaze fixed on the United States. A few minutes after he alighted at Moscow's Central Airport, the Soviet Communist Party leader announced that the Soviet Union was ready to cooperate with the United States in developing trade and cultural relations and solving the disarmament problem."

Khrushchev spoke approvingly of President Eisenhower's speech of April 21 to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, expressed confidence in the possibility of cooperation between the two countries and hoped that the President's words would be followed by action. All matters in dispute between the two countries, said Khrushchev, could be peacefully resolved, provided that there was good will on both sides. Soviet policy makers are still holding their lead in proffering peace and good order to a rapidly changing world.

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Entangling Alliances

Secretary of State Dulles in a statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 30, 1956, favored a foreign aid program for 1956-1957 involving outlays of about $4 billion. More than a third of this amount is earmarked for Korea, China (sic), Indo-China, the Philippines, and Japan. Such areas as Korea, Formosa, and Southeast Asia "are of vital importance from the standpoint of the United States. If any one of them was lost it would involve a dangerous break-through into the Western Pacific area." "These positions are primarily held by local forces largely trained and equipped by the United States." The local forces "are not alone sufficient to withstand the full might of Chinese Communist military power backed by the Soviet Union." Hence the need for United States support.

Secretary Dulles continued:

> Then there is the Middle East situation. Pakistan, Iran and Turkey all have common borders with the Soviet Union, and Iraq is close to it. All four are subject to Soviet threats and the proximity of Soviet power. Pakistan is an ally of ours under the Southeast Asia Treaty. Turkey is an ally of ours under the North Atlantic Treaty, and all four of these countries have united for collective security under the Baghdad Pact. They hold the gateway to the South, where are found the oil reserves which are vital to the military power and industrial strength of Western Europe. Also just beyond is the gateway to Africa. It would be reckless not to help these countries to help themselves and at the same time to help us. The estimate of military aid and defense support expenditure next year for these countries is in the neighborhood of $800,000,000.
>
> Then we come to Western Europe. There the military forces of NATO stand guard over the greatest industrial and military treasure that there is within the free world, except for the United States itself. So important do we consider this that a substantial part of the United States armed force is stationed in Western Europe for its defense.

United States commitments, primarily military and political, but incidentally economic, thus extend beyond the Western Hemisphere across virtually the entire non-communist world. By whose authority? The authority of Washington. For what purpose? The declared purpose is "safeguarding United States interests." These Washington commitments which involve some control of the internal affairs and the foreign relations of the countries most directly concerned, are the outcome of the Truman Doctrine, announced in March, 1947 and

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given operational effectiveness by the Eisenhower Big Business Administration of 1953-1956.

Washington administers these Asian and European areas in much the same way that a real estate management corporation administers the properties committed to its care. This is not 19th century colonial-imperialism, but 20th century managerial imperialism, tailored to fit the requirements for world domination in an age of national self-determination under the umbrella of hydrogen bomb diplomacy.

Liquid Gold

Known oil reserves as estimated by the Petroleum Information Bureau:

Middle East	66	percent
United States	17	"
South America	7	"
Soviet areas	6	"
Scattering	4	"
	100	"

While only a tiny fraction of the human race lives in the Middle East, the area contains two-thirds of the planet's known petroleum deposits. The result? Read Harvey O'Connor's *Empire of Oil,* chapter 24, "The Struggle for the World's Oil." (Monthly Review Press, 66 Barrow Street, New York 14, N. Y. $5)

There is a rational alternative to this fratricidal struggle for nature's wealth: (1) Consider natural resources as the common heritage of mankind. (2) Use them economically and (3) conserve them systematically, (4) under the direction of a world economic authority responsible to a competent, representative world government.

Economic Paralysis

Led by the *Wall Street Journal,* the United States big business press has been describing the plight of the automobile industry. The latest series of articles, based on a nation-wide survey, blossomed on the front page of the *New York Times* of May 1, 1956, under the headline: "Recession Amid Boom Hits Auto and Farm Tool Fields." The facts presented in these articles are widely known: dealer and factory over-stocks, factory cut-backs and lay-offs, cancellations of orders for materials and supplies.

The significant aspects of the situation are the steps leading up to this economic semi-paralysis of two important United States industries.

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1. Leaders in the auto industry accepted the principle that the economy must expand in order to survive.

2. Expansion required investment in increased production capacity and the hiring of additional personnel with a corresponding rise in production.

3. Then came the problem of marketing—at home and abroad. The foreign auto market, after 1947, was taken over, first by British and French and later by German cars. For United States manufacturers the export market was incidental. (In 1954, 173,000 passenger cars were exported out of total sales for the year of 5,559,000 cars.) The home market was the important field—38 million registered autos in 1947; 49 million in 1950; 56 million in 1953; 61 million in 1955—up and up went the demand for cars. But during those years productive capacity grew faster than the market.

4. To meet the resulting over-production emergency the public was cajoled, wheedled, stimulated, and subsidized by the storm of auto advertising and high pressure selling which swept over the country in 1955. Sales rose to record levels, but the selling campaign exhausted the market. Taking advantage of bargain prices and attractive credit offers, millions bought cars in 1955 that, under ordinary conditions, they would have bought in 1956 or 1957. The auto sales boom ended in 1955. The early months of 1956 saw the first phase of the recession, with idle machines and partly employed or unemployed personnel in the auto industry, its subsidiaries and dependencies.

Recession in the auto industry is another example of the chaos and dislocation that must overtake power-age economic expansion during which production and consumption are planfully unrelated.

Resistance in Alabama

Forty-five thousand Negroes in Montgomery, Alabama are conducting a successful boycott of the segregated Montgomery busses. The boycott began when a Negro woman who refused to move to the rear of a segregated bus was arrested. It has grown into an organized struggle, led by the Montgomery Improvement Association and supported by virtually the entire Negro population of the city. It is a non-violent, non-cooperation effort, centering in the Negro churches.

The conflict between white segregationists and Negro advocates of equal opportunity on a first-come-first-served basis has attracted front-page attention in the United States. Abroad it has been followed with keen attention, especially by the victims of color discrimination, who wonder why Voice of America apostrophes to freedom in Europe and Asia do not lead to appropriate action in Montgomery, Alabama.

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To get the horse before the cart...

IN the March issue of *Monthly Review,* Paul Sweezy wrote an article stimulated by his reading of *Paris to Peking* by Joseph R. Starobin.

In this issue, Mr. Starobin has written a kind of response to Mr. Sweezy's trenchant comments on literature on the American Left.

Now the publishers of *Paris to Peking* consider it is fitting that we should put in our two cents worth. We feel that *Monthly Review* readers who have read Mr. Sweezy's article and who may read Mr. Starobin's answer will find it time to read the book which started the whole business.

Paris to Peking is Mr. Starobin's account of almost a year spent in China (by way of some fascinating months in France and Italy) since the Liberation. It is the first American newsman's eyewitness account to deal with events in China since 1949. But as all know who have read Paul Sweezy's article, it is much more than a modern Marco Polo account of the new China. It is also a very political book *vis à vis* the U.S.A., a book of personal re-evaluation by an American radical who found his West-East experience of immense value in discovering new insights into the political problems of the American Left.

We say this: both articles are interesting and provocative, but we believe *Monthly Review* readers ought to begin at the beginning by reading *Paris to Peking* in order to get the horse before the cart in an important political discussion.

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(*continued from inside front cover*)

lectures and faculty colloquiums to undergraduate-sponsored meetings and discussions. In addition, he addressed more than a dozen non-campus meetings in public halls and private homes. His topics were varied but with few exceptions dealt with aspects of the decline of capitalism and the present world-wide competition between capitalism and socialism. On the whole, we feel that the trip was very successful. The most encouraging feature was that audiences were *consistently* larger than either speaker or sponsors anticipated, and discussion throughout was lively and serious. The largest meeting was a debate with Professor Milton Friedman at the University of Chicago which had to be moved twice to make room for an audience which finally numbered between 400 and 500. Sweezy received a warm welcome at all the institutions visited, and at none was there any attempt to prevent him from speaking. We conclude (a) that the academic community has made a good recovery from the shell shock of the McCarthy period (though dissenting points of view are still largely unrepresented on most university and college faculties), and (b) that faculty and students alike are showing an increasing desire to discuss seriously the real issues of our time.

This is all to the good and indicates that the situation may soon be ripe for the emergence of a genuine socialist movement on American campuses. There is one respect, however, in which Sweezy's trip was definitely disappointing: the number of subscriptions sold and the amount of money contributed to the support of MR were both much too small. More and more Americans are coming to realize that in a world of competitive coexistence it is vitally important that socialist views should be intelligently presented and widely disseminated—in fact, that this is just as important for supporters of capitalism as it is for advocates of socialism. But so far at any rate, there is not much sign of a willingness to pay the cost of having the job done well. We don't want anyone to misunderstand our position on this subject. We are trying to do the job, and we need a lot more financial support than we are getting. But we are not selling gadgets, and we do not propose to go into the business of high-pressure salesmanship. If Americans, and particularly Americans of the Left, want a decent socialist press, they are going to have to wake up to the fact that they've got to subscribe to it and support it financially.

Our July issue will be devoted to recent developments in the Soviet Union and their implications for the United States. In addition to an editorial evaluation, we are planning to include a first-hand report by an American university professor who was lucky enough to be in Moscow both two months before and again during the XX Congress, an expert's account of the Sixth Five Year Plan, and an article by Joshua Kunitz on recent revelations concerning the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union.

On the whole, American scientists have shirked their responsibility to educate the people here and abroad to the implications and dangers of A-bomb and H-bomb tests. We are glad to be able to report, especially to our numerous Japanese readers, that not all American scientists have taken this attitude. Two scientists at Utah State Agricultural College, Dr. Norman Bauer and Dr. E. W. Pfeiffer, published articles in the Logan, Utah, *Herald Journal* of April 13th and April 16th on the then-forthcoming tests in the Pacific which can be regarded as models of what the scientist owes the public in matters of this kind. We hope and expect that more scientists will follow their example in the future.

The Sweezy case now goes to the United States Supreme Court, the New Hampshire Supreme Court having refused to re-hear the case in the light of the Steve Nelson decision.

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